

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Emanuelle Mastelari, I am from Bethel.

I stand in support of HB 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status. Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 26; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals have access to health coverage.

I am Emanuelle Mastelari and I care about HUSKY for Immigrants because I have used that insurance for years and I feel really lucky to be able to have it. My parents are legal immigrants and they've always had it. I believe everyone should have access to medical care no matter their immigration status. Many immigrants work blue collar jobs that can be physically tough, they deserve the right to be medically treated without falling into a bottomless pit of debt.

My mom has been a legal citizen of the US for some time now but she still knows people who aren't documented and have to hold off on getting the medical attention they need because they don't have insurance. One of her friends is undocumented and whenever she needs medical help, she goes to an Urgent Care. If anything happened that was beyond the abilities of an Urgent Care, she has no idea what she would do. Her daughter is a US Citizen so she is eligible for health insurance but how can she take care of her child if she can't take care of herself? Immigrants are still people and their health is just as important as any other US citizen.

I personally know a lot of people who would be able to qualify for health insurance if the legislature was passed. Immigrants come to America to be able to provide for themselves and build a safe and happy future for their families. How can they do that with the threat of financial ruin at every turn? My mom has kept my family afloat for years but she had to become a citizen in order to actually start getting the benefits that would've helped her earlier in her transition to moving to the US. We can help illegal immigrants get a head start on their new lives by giving them the same type of safety that legal citizens are afforded.

I support **HB 6616** and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Emanuelle Mastelari